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# THE OLD SWIMMING HOLE

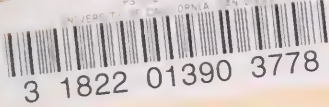
AND  
ELEVEN  
MORE  
POEMS

JAMES  
WHITCOMB  
RILEY



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"THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE"  
AND 'LEVEN MORE POEMS.

### PUBLISHERS' NOTE.

This series of Hoosier dialect poems, by James W. Riley, originally appeared in THE INDIANAPOLIS JOURNAL, over the pseudonym of Benj. F. Johnson, of Boone. They commanded such general attention and praise, as to lead the publishers of this volume to place them before the public in their present complete form.







"The  
Old Swimmin'-hole,"

AND

'Leven More Poems,

BY

BENJ. F. JOHNSON, OF BOONE.

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[JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY.]

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SIXTH EDITION.

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1888.

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## PREFACE.

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AS FAR BACK into boyhood as the writer's memory may intelligently go, the "country poet" is most pleasantly recalled. He was, and is, as common as the "country fiddler," and as full of good old-fashioned music. Not a master of melody, indeed, but a poet, certainly—

"Who, through long days of labor,  
And nights devoid of ease,  
Still heard in his soul the music  
Of wonderful melodies."

And it is simply the purpose of this series of dialectic Studies to reflect the real worth of this homely child of Nature, and to echo faithfully, if possible, the faltering music of his song.

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.,  
July, 1883.

J. W. R.

## CONTENTS.

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|  |    |
|--|----|
| THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE . . . . .        | 9  |
| THOUGHTS FER THE DISCOURAGED FARMER .  | 13 |
| A SUMMER'S DAY . . . . .               | 17 |
| A HYMB OF FAITH . . . . .              | 20 |
| WORTER-MELON-TIME . . . . .            | 23 |
| MY PHILOSOFY . . . . .                 | 28 |
| WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUNKIN . .    | 31 |
| ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE MAHALA ASHCRAFT | 34 |
| THE MULBERRY TREE . . . . .            | 37 |
| TO MY OLD NEGHBOR, WILLIAM LEACHMAN .  | 40 |
| MY FIDDLE . . . . .                    | 46 |
| THE CLOVER . . . . .                   | 49 |

## THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE AND 'LEVEN MORE POEMS.

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### THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! whare the  
  crick so still and deep  
Looked like a baby-river that was laying  
  half asleep,  
And the gurgle of the worter round the  
  drift jest below  
Sounded like the laugh of something we  
  onc't ust to know  
Before we could remember anything but  
  the eyes  
Of the angels lookin' out as we left Para-  
  dise;  
But the merry days of youth is beyond our  
  control,  
And it's hard to part ferever with the old  
  swimmin'-hole.

10    *THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE.*

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole!    In the happy  
    days of yore,  
When I ust to lean above it on the old  
    sickamore,  
Oh! it showed me a face in its warm sunny  
    tide  
That gazed back at me so gay and glorified,  
It made me love myself, as I leaped to ca-  
    ress  
My shadder smilin' up at me with such  
    tenderness.  
But them days is past and gone, and old  
    Time's tuck his toll  
From the old man come back to the old  
    swimmin'-hole.  
  
Oh! the old swimmin'-hole!    In the long,  
    lazy days  
When the hum-drum of school made so  
    many run-a-ways,  
How plesant was the journey down the old  
    dusty lane,  
Whare the tracks of our bare feet was all  
    printed so plain  
You could tell by the dent of the heel and  
    the sole  
They was lots o' fun on hands at the old  
    swimmin'-hole.

*THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE.* 11

But the lost joys is past! Let your tears in  
sorrow roll  
Like the rain that ust to dapple up the old  
swimmin'-hole.

Thare the bullrushes growed, and the cat-  
tails so tall,  
And the sunshine and shadder fell over it  
all;  
And it mottled the worter with amber and  
gold  
Till the glad lilies rocked in the ripples  
that rolled;  
And the snake-feeder's four gauzy wings  
fluttered by  
Like the ghost of a daisy dropped out of  
the sky,  
Or a wounded apple-blossom in the breeze's  
control,  
As it cut acrost some orchard to'rds the old  
swimmin'-hole.

Oh! the old swimmin'-hole! When I last  
saw the place,  
The scenes was all changed, like the  
change in my face;  
The bridge of the railroad now crosses the  
spot

12    *THE OLD SWIMMIN'-HOLE.*

Whare the old divin'-log lays sunk and  
fergot.

And I stray down the banks whare the  
trees ust to be—

But never again will their shade shelter  
me!

And I wish in my sorrow I could strip to  
the soul,

And dive off in my grave like the old  
swimmin'-hole.



## THOUGHTS FER THE DISCOURAGED FARMER.

THE summer winds is sniffin' round the  
bloomin' locus' trees;

And the clover in the pastur' is a big day  
fer the bees,

And they been a-swigin' honey, above  
board and on the sly,

Till they stutter in their buzzin', and stagger  
as they fly.

The flicker on the fence-rail 'pears to jest  
spit on his wings

And roll up his feathers, by the easy way  
he sing.

And the boss-fly is a-whettin'-up his fore-  
legs fer to.

And the off-mare is a-swinkin' all of her  
tail they is.

You can hear the blackbirds jawin' as they  
foller up the plow—

Oh, they're bound to get their breakfast  
and they eat a sartin' how.

So they quarrel in the furries, and they  
quarrel on the wing—  
But they're peaceabler in pot-pies than any  
other thing:  
And it's when I git my shotgun drawed up  
in stiddy rest,  
She's as full of tribbellation as a yaller-  
jacket's nest;  
And a few shots before dinner, when the  
sun's a-shinin' right,  
Seems to kindo-sorto sharpen up a feller's  
appetite!

They's been a heap o' rain, but the sun's  
out to-day,  
And the clouds of the wet spell is all  
cleared away,  
And the woods is all the greener, and the  
grass is greener still;  
It may rain again to-morry, but I don't  
think it will.  
Some says the crops is ruined, and the corn's  
drownded out,  
And prophasy the wheat will be a failure,  
without doubt;  
But the kind Providence that has never  
failed us yet,

Will be on hands one't more at the 'leventh  
hour, I bet!

Does the meddler-lark complain, as he swims  
high and dry  
Through the waves of the wind and the  
blue of the sky?

Does the quail set up and whistle in a dis-  
appointed way,  
Er hang his head in silence, and sorrow all  
the day?

Is the chipmuck's health a-failin'? Does  
he walk, er does he run?

Don't the buzzards ooze around up thare  
jest like they've allus done?

Is they anything the matter with the  
rooster's lungs er voice?

Ort a mortal be complainin' when dumb  
animals rejoice?

Then let us, one and all, be contented with  
our lot;

The June is here this morning, and the sun  
is shining hot.

Oh! let us fill our harts up with the glory  
of the day,

16      *DISCOURAGED FARMER.*

And banish ev'ry doubt and care and sorrow far away!

Whatever be our station, with Providence  
for guide,

Such fine circumstances ort to make us  
satisfied;

Fer the world is full of roses, and the roses  
full of dew,

And the dew is full of heavenly love that  
drips fer me and you.

## A SUMMER'S DAY.

THE Summer's put the idy in  
My head that I'm a boy again;  
And all around's so bright and gay  
I want to put my team away,  
And jest git out whare I can lay  
And soak my hide full of the day!  
But work is work, and must be done—  
Yet, as I work, I have my fun,  
Jest fancyin' these furries here  
Is childhood's paths onc't more so dear:—  
And so I walk through medder-lands,  
And country lanes, and swampy trails  
Whare long bullrushes bresh my hands;  
And, tilted on the ridered rails  
Of deadnin' fences, "Old Bob White"  
Whistles his name in high delight,  
And whirrs away. I wunder still,  
Whichever way a boy's feet will—  
Whare trees has fell, with tangled tops  
Whare dead leaves shakes, I stop fer  
Heerin' the acorn as it drops— [breth,  
H'istin' my chin up still as deth,

And watchin' clos't, with upturned eyes,  
The tree whare Mr. Squirrel tries  
To hide hisse'f above the limb,  
But lets his own tale tell on him.

I wunder on in deeper glooms—  
Git hungry, hearin' female cries  
From old farm-houses, whare perfumes  
Of harvest dinners seem to rise  
And ta'nt a feller, hart and brane,  
With memories he can't explain.

I wunder through the underbresh,  
Whare pig-tracks, pintin' to'rds the crick  
Is picked and printed in the fresh  
Black-bottom lands, like wimmern pick  
Their pie-crusts with a fork, some way,  
When bakin' fer camp-meetin' day.

I wunder on and on and on,  
Till my gray hair and beard is gone,  
And every wrinkle on my brow  
Is rubbed clean out, and shaddered now  
With curls as brown and fair and fine  
As tenderls of the wild grape-vine  
That ust to climb the highest tree  
To keep the ripest ones fer me.  
I wunder still, and here I am  
Wadin' the ford below the dam—

The worter chucklin' round my knee  
At hornet-welt and bramble scratch,  
And me a-slippin' 'crost to see  
Ef Tyner's plums is ripe, and size  
The old man's wortermelon-patch,  
With juicy mouth and drouthy eyes.  
Then, after sich a day of mirth  
And happiness as worlds is worth—  
So tired that heaven seems nigh about,—  
The sweetest tiredness on earth  
Is to git home and flatten out—  
So tired you can't lay flat enough,  
And sort o' wish that you could spread  
Out like molasses on the bed,  
And jest drip off the aidges in  
The dreams that never comes again.

## A HYMB OF FAITH.

O, THOU that doth all things devise  
And fashion fer the best,  
Help us who sees with mortal eyes  
To overlook the rest.

They's times, of course, we grope in doubt,  
And in affliction sore;  
So knock the louder, Lord, without,  
And we'll unlock the door.

Make us to feel, when times looks bad  
And tears in pitty melts,  
Thou wast the only help we had  
When they was nothin' else.

Death comes alike to ev'ry man  
That ever was borned on earth;  
Then let us do the best we can  
To live for all life's worth.

Ef storms and tempests dread to see  
Makes black the heavens o'er,



They done the same in Galillee,  
Two thousand years before.

But, after all, the golden sun  
Poured out its floods on them  
That watched and waited fer the One  
Then borned in Bethlyham.

Also, the star of holy writ  
Made noonday of the night,  
While other stars that looked at it  
Was envious with delight.

The sages then in worship bowed,  
From every clime so fare;  
O, sinner, think of that glad crowd  
That congregated thare!

They was content to fall in ranks  
With One that knowed the way  
From good old Jurden's stormy banks  
Clean up to Judgment Day.

No matter, then, how all is mixed  
In our near-sighted eyes,  
All things is fer the best, and fixed  
Out straight in Paradise.

Then take things as God sends 'em here,  
And, ef we live or die,  
Be more and more contenteder,  
Without a-asking why.

O, thou that doth all things devise  
And fashion fer the best,  
Help us who sees with mortal eyes  
To overlook the rest.

## WORTER-MELON TIME.

OLD worter-melon time is a-comin' round  
again,

And they ain't no man a-livin' any tick-  
leder'n me,

Fer the way I hanke after worter-melons  
is a sin—

Which is the why and wharefore, as you  
can plainly see.

Oh, it's in the sandy soil worter-melons  
does the best,

And its thare they'll lay and waller in  
the sunshine and the dew

Till they wear all the green streaks clean  
off of theyr breast,

And you bet I ain't a-findin' any fault  
with them; air you?

They ain't no better thing in the vegetable  
line;

And they don't need much 'tendin', as  
ev'ry farmer knows;

And when theyr ripe and ready fer to  
pluck from the vine,  
I want to say to you theyr the best fruit  
that grows.

It's some likes the yaller-core, and some  
likes the red,  
And it's some says "The little Californy"  
is the best;  
But the sweetest slice of all I ever wedged  
in my head,  
Is the old "Edingburg Mounting-sprout,"  
of the west.

You don't want no punkins nigh your wor-  
ter-melon vines—  
'Cause, some-way-another, they'll spile  
your melons, shore;—  
I've seed 'em taste like punkins, from the  
core to the rines,  
Which may be a fact you have heerd of  
before.

But your melons that's raised right, and  
'tended to with care,  
You can walk around amongst 'em with  
a parent's pride and joy,  
And thump 'em on the heads with as  
fatherly a air

As ef each one of them was your little  
girl er boy.

I joy in my hart jest to hear that rippin'  
sound

When you split one down the back and  
jolt the halves in two,  
And the friends you love the best is geth-  
ered all around—

And you says unto your sweetheart, "Oh  
here's the core fer you!"

And I like to slice 'em up in big pieces fer  
'em all,

Espeshally the children, and watch theyr  
high delight

As one by one the rines with theyr pink  
notches falls,

And they holler fer some more, with un-  
quenched appetite.

Boys take to it natchural, and I like to see  
'em eat—

A slice of worter-melon's like a french-  
harp in theyr hands,

And when they "saw" it through theyr  
mouth sich music can't be beat—

'Cause it's music both the sperit and the  
stummick understands.

Oh, they's more in worter-melons than the  
purty-colored meat,  
And the overflowin' sweetness of the  
worter squashed betwixt  
The up'ard and the down'ard motions of  
a feller's teeth,  
And it's the taste of ripe old age and  
juicy childhood mixed.

Fer I never taste a melon but my thoughts  
flies away  
To the summertime of youth, and again  
I see the dawn,  
And the fadin' afternoon of the long sum-  
mer day,  
And the dusk and dew a-fallin', and the  
night a-comin' on.

And thare's the corn around us, and the  
lispin' leaves and trees,  
And the stars a-peekin' down on us as  
still as silver mice,  
And us boys in the worter-melons on our  
hands and knees,  
And the new moon hangin' o'er us like a  
yaller-cored slice.

O, it's worter-melon time is a-comin' round  
again,

And they ain't no man a-livin' any tick-  
leder'n me,  
Fer the way I hanker after worter-melons  
is a sin—  
Which is the why and wharefore, as you  
can plainly see.

## MY PHILOSOFY.

I AINT, ner don't p'tend to be,  
Much posted on philosophy;  
But thare is times, when all alone,  
I work out idees of my own.  
And of these same thare is a few  
I'd like to jest refer to you—  
Pervidin' that you don't object  
To listen clos't and rickollect.

I allus argy that a man  
Who does about the best he can  
Is plenty good enough to suit  
This lower mundane institute—  
No matter ef his daily walk  
Is subject fer his neighbor's talk,  
And critic-minds of ev'ry whim  
Jest all git up and go fer him!

I knowed a feller onc't that had  
The yaller-janders mighty bad,  
And each and ev'ry friend he'd meet  
Would stop and give him a receet



Fer curin' of 'em. But he'd say  
He kind o' thought they'd go away  
Without no medicin', and boast  
That he'd git well without one doste.

He kep' a yallerin' on—and they  
Perdictin' that he'd die some day  
Before he knowed it! Tuck his bed,  
The feller did, and lost his head,  
And wundered in his mind a spell—  
Then rallied, and, at last, got well;  
But ev'ry friend that said he'd die  
Went back on him eternaly!

Its natchural enough, I guess,  
When some gits more and some gits less,  
Fer them-uns on the slimmest side  
To claim it aint a fair divide;  
And I've knowed some to lay and wait,  
And git up soon, and set up late,  
To ketch some feller they could hate  
Fer goin' at a faster gait.

The signs is bad when folks commence  
A findin' fault with Providence,  
And balkin' 'cause the earth don't shake  
At ev'ry prancin' step they take.

No man is great till he can see  
How less than little he would be  
Ef stripped to self, and stark and bare  
He hung his sign out anywhare.

My doctern is to lay aside  
Contentions, and be satisfied:  
Jest do your best, and praise er blame  
That follers that, counts jest the same.  
I've allus noticed grate success  
Is mixed with troubles, more or less  
And its the man who does the best  
That gits more kicks than all the rest

WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE  
PUNKIN.

WHEN the frost is on the punkin and the  
fodder's in the shock,  
And you hear the kyouck and gobble of  
the struttin' turkey-cock,  
And the clackin' of the guineys, and the  
cluckin' of the hens,  
And the rooster's hallylooyer as he tiptoes  
on the fence;  
O its then's the times a feller is a-feelin' at  
his best,  
With the risin' sun to greet him from a  
night of peaceful rest,  
As he leaves the house, bare-headed, and  
goes out to feed the stock,  
When the frost is on the punkin and the  
fodder's in the shock.  
  
They's something kindo' harty-like about  
the atmosphere

When the heat of summer's over and the  
  coolin' fall is here—  
Of course we miss the flowers, and the  
  blossoms on the trees,  
And the mumble of the hummin'-birds  
  and buzzin' of the bees;  
But the air's so appetizin'; and the land-  
  scape through the haze  
Of a crisp and sunny morning of the airy  
  autumn days  
Is a pictur' that no painter has the colorin'  
  to mock—  
When the frost is on the punkin and the  
  fodder's in the shock.

The husky, rusty rustle of the tassels of the  
  corn,  
And the raspin' of the tangled leaves, as  
  golden as the morn;  
The stubble in the furries—kindo' lone-  
  some-like, but still  
A-preachin' sermons to us of the barns they  
  grewed to fill;  
The strawstack in the medder, and the  
  reaper in the shed;  
The hosses in theyr stalls below—the clover  
  overhead!—

*FROST ON THE PUNKIN.*     33

O, it sets my heart a-clickin' like the tickin'  
of a clock,  
When the frost is on the punkin and the  
fodder's in the shock!

ON THE DEATH OF LITTLE MAHALA  
ASHCRAFT.

"LITTLE HALY! Little Haly!" cheeps the  
robin in the tree;  
"Little Haly!" sighs the clover, "Little  
Haly!" moans the bee;  
"Little Haly! Little Haly!" calls the kill-  
deer at twilight;  
And the katydids and crickets hollers  
"Haly" all the night.

The sunflowers and the hollyhawks droops  
over the garden fence;  
The old path down the gardenwalks still  
holds her footprints' dents;  
And the well-sweep's swingin' bucket seems  
to wait fer her to come  
And start it on its wortery errant down the  
old bee-gum.

The bee-hives all is quiet, and the little  
Jersey steer,

When any one comes nigh it, acts so lone-  
some like and queer;  
And the little Banty chickens kind o' cut-  
ters faint and low,  
Like the hand that now was feedin' 'em  
was one they didn't know.

They's sorrow in the wavin' leaves of all  
the apple-trees;  
And sorrow in the harvest-sheaves, and  
sorrow in the breeze;  
And sorrow in the twitter of the swallers  
'round the shed;  
And all the song her red-bird sings is "Lit-  
tle Haly's dead!"

The medder 'pears to miss her, and the  
pathway through the grass,  
Whare the dewdrops ust to kiss her little  
bare feet as she passed;  
And the old pin in the gate-post seems to  
kindo-sorto' doubt  
That Haly's little sunburnt hands'll ever  
pull it out.

Did her father er her mother ever love her  
more'n me,  
Er her sisters er her brother prize her love  
more tenderly?

36 *LITTLE MAHALA ASHCRAFT.*

I question—and what answer?—only tears,  
and tears alone,  
And ev'ry neighbor's eyes is full o' tear-  
drops as my own.

“Little Haly! Little Haly!” cheeps the  
robin in the tree;  
“Little Haly!” sighs the clover, “Little  
Haly!” moans the bee;  
“Little Haly! Little Haly!” calls the kill-  
deer at twilight,  
And the katydids and crickets hollers  
“Haly” all the night.



## THE MULBERRY TREE.

O, its many's the scenes which is dear to  
my mind

As I think of my childhood so long left  
behind;

The home of my birth, with its old pun-  
cheon floor,

And the bright mornin'-glories that grewed  
round the door;

The warped clab-board roof where the rain  
it run off

Into streams of sweet dreams as I laid in  
the loft,

Countin' all of the joys that was dearest  
to me,

And a-thinkin' the most of the mulberry  
tree.

And to-day as I dream, with both eyes  
wide-awake,

I can see the old tree, and its limbs as they  
shake,

And the long purple berries that rained  
on the ground

Whare the pastur' was bald whare we  
trommped it around.

And again, peekin' up through the thick  
leafy shade,

I can see the glad smiles of the friends  
when I strayed

With my little bare feet from my own  
mother's knee

To foller them off to the mulberry tree.

Leanin' up in the forks, I can see the old  
rail,

And the boy climbin' up it, claw, tooth,  
and toe-nail,

And in fancy can hear, as he spits on his  
hands,

The ring of his laugh and the rip of his  
pants.

But that rail led to glory, as certain and  
shore

As I'll never climb thare by that rout' any  
more—

What was all the green laurels of Fame  
unto me,

With my brows in the boughs of the mul-  
berry tree?

Then its who can fergit the old mulberry  
tree  
That he knowed in the days when his  
thoughts was as free  
As the flutterin' wings of the birds that  
flew out  
Of the tall wavin' tops as the boys come  
about?  
O, a crowd of my memories, laughin' and  
gay,  
Is a-climbin' the fence of that pastur' to-  
day,  
And a pantin' with joy, as us boys ust to be,  
They go racin' acrost fer the mulberry tree.

TO MY OLD NEGHBOR, WILLIAM  
LEACHMAN.

Fer forty year and better you have been a  
friend to me,  
Through days of sore afflictions and dire  
adversity,  
You allus had a kind word of counsel to  
impart,  
Which was like a healin' 'intment to the  
sorrow of my hart.

When I burried my first womern, William  
Leachman, it was you  
Had the only consolation that I could lis-  
ten to—  
Fer I knowed you had gone through it and  
had rallied from the blow,  
And when you said I'd do the same, I  
knowed you'd ort to know.

But that time I'll long remember; how I  
wundered here and thare—

Through the settin'-room and kitchen, and  
out in the open air—  
And the snowflakes whirlin', whirlin', and  
the fields a frozen glare,  
And the neighbors' sleds and wagons con-  
gregatin ev'rywhare.

I turned my eyes to'rds heaven, but the  
sun was hid away;  
I turned my eyes to'rds earth again, but  
all was cold and gray;  
And the clock, like ice a-crackin', clickt  
the icy hours in two—  
And my eyes'd never thawed out ef it  
hadn't been fer you!

We set thare by the smoke-house—me and  
you out thare alone—  
Me a-thinkin'—you a-talkin' in a soothin'  
undertone—  
You a-talkin'—me a-thinkin' of the sum-  
mers long ago,  
And a-writin' "Marthy—Marthy" with my  
finger in the snow!

William Leachman, I can see you jest as  
plain as I could then;

And your hand is on my shoulder, and you  
rouse me up again;  
And I see the tears a-drippin' from your  
own eyes, as you say:  
"Be reconciled and bear it—we but linger  
fer a day!"

At the last Old Settlers' Meetin', we went  
j'intly, you and me—  
Your hosses and my wagon, as you wanted  
it to be;  
And sence I can remember, from the time  
we've neghored here,  
In all sich friendly actions you have double-  
done your sheer.

It was better than the meetin', too, that  
9-mile talk we had  
Of the times when we first settled here and  
travel was so bad;  
When we had to go on hoss-back, and  
sometimes on "Shanks's mare,"  
And "blaze" a road fer them behind that  
had to travel thare.

And now we was a-trottin' 'long a leve'  
gravel pike,

In a big two-hoss road-wagon, jest as easy  
as you like—

Two of us on the front seat, and our wim-  
ern-folks behind,

A-settin' in their Winsor cheers in perfect  
peace of mind!

And we pinte out old landmarks, nearly  
faded out of sight:—

Thare they ust to rob the stage-coach; thare  
Gash Morgan had the fight

With the old stag-deer that pronged him—  
how he battled fer his life,

And lived to prove the story by the handle  
of his knife.

Thare the first griss-mill was put up in the  
settlement, and we

Had tuck our grindin' to it in the fall of  
Forty-three—

When we tuck our rifles with us, techin'  
elbows all the way,

And a-stickin' right together ev'ry minute,  
night and day.

Thare ust to stand the tavern that they  
called the "Travelers' Rest,"

And thare, beyent the covered bridge,  
"The Counterfitters' Nest"—  
Whare they claimed the house was ha'nted  
—that a man was murdered thare,  
And burried underneath the floor, er round  
the place somewhere.

And the old Plank Road they laid along in  
Fifty-one er two—  
You know we talked about the times when  
that old road was new:  
How "Uncle Sam" put down that road and  
never taxed the State  
Was a problem, don't you rickollect, we  
couldn't dimonstrate?

Ways was devious, William Leachman, that  
me and you has past;  
But as I found you true at first, I find you  
true at last,  
And, now the time's a-comin' mighty nigh  
our jurney's end,  
I want to throw wide open all my soul to  
you, my friend.

With the stren'th of all my bein', and the  
heat of hart and brane,



And ev'ry livn' drop of blood in artery  
and vane,  
I love you and respect you, and I venerate  
your name,  
Fer the name of William Leachman and  
True Manhood's jest the same!

### MY FIDDLE.

MY FIDDLE?—Well, I kindo' keep her handy,  
don't you know!

Though I aint so much inclined to tromp  
the strings and switch the bow

As I was before the timber of my elbows  
got so dry,

And my fingers was more limber-like and  
caperish and spry;

Yet I can plonk and plunk and plink,

And tune her up and play,

And jest lean back and laugh and wink  
At ev'ry rainy day!

My playin's only middlin'—tunes I picked  
up when a boy—

The kindo'-sorto' fiddlin, that the folks  
calls "cordaroy;"

"The Old Fat Gal," and "Rye-straw," and  
"My Sailyor's on the Sea,"

Is the old cowtillions I "saw" when the  
ch'ice is left to me;

And so I plunk and plonk and plink,  
And rosum-up my bow,  
And play the tunes that makes you think  
The devil's in your toe!

I was allus a romancin', do-less boy, to tell  
the truth,  
A-fiddlin' and a-dancin', and a wastin' of  
my youth,  
And a actin' and a cuttin'-up all sorts o'  
silly pranks  
That wasn't worth a button of anybody's  
thanks!  
But they tell me, when I ust to plink  
And plonk and plunk and play,  
My music seemed to have the kink  
O' drivin' cares away!

That's how this here old fiddle's won my  
hart's indurin' love!  
From the strings acrost her middle to the  
schreechin' keys above—  
From her "aperu," over bridge, and to the  
ribbon round her throat,  
She's a wooin', cooin' pigeon, singin' "Love  
me" ev'ry note!

And so I pat her neck, and plink  
Her strings with lovin' hands,  
And, list'nin' clos't, I sometimes think  
She kindo' understands!

## THE CLOVER.

SOME sings of the lily, and daisy, and rose,  
And the pansies and pinks that the summertime throws

In the green grassy lap of the medder that  
lays

Blinkin' up at the skyes through the sunshiny days;

But what is the lily, and all of the rest  
Of the flowers, to a man with a hart in his breast

That was dipped brimmin' full of the honey  
and dew

Of the sweet clover-blossoms his babyhood  
knew?

I never set eyes on a clover-field now,  
Er fool round a stable, er climb in the mow,  
But my childhood comes back jest as clear  
and as plain

As the smell of the clover I'm sniffin'  
again;

And I wunder away in a bare-footed dream,

Whare I tangle my toes in the blossoms  
that gleam  
With the dew of the dawn of the morning  
of love  
Ere it wept o'er the graves that I'm weepin'  
above.

And so I love clover—it seems like a part  
Of the sacredest sorrows and joys of my  
hart;  
And wharever it blossoms, oh, thare let me  
bow  
And thank the good God as I'm thankin'  
Him now;  
And I pray to Him still fer the stren'th,  
when I die,  
To go out in the clover and tell it good-bye,  
And lovin'ly nestle my face in its bloom  
While my soul slips away on a breth of  
perfume.













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